



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Minutes
September 10, 2019

Commission Present: Healy, Pierce, Farrell, Todd and Traverse

Staff Present: Wight, Cate, Roach, Cahill and Putzier

The meeting was convened at 5:34p.m. by Chair Pierce

Approval of Agenda

Farrell made a motion to approve the agenda by moving up item V. BTV Stat Presentation after the Consent Agenda, second by Todd, motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Healy read aloud the consent agenda into the record, motion was made to approve the consent agenda with the included motions by Todd, second by Farrell, motion carried.

BTV Stat Presentation

Wight explained the department had to present to the Mayor and other departments and began explaining the layout of the department and what the reporting was on this quarter. It consisted of Parks and Open Spaces and Recreation Facilities.

Began with an explanation of the conservation and open spaces and how managing our parks and open spaces and the acreage, an identified said spaces. Cahill spoke to the volunteers and how they explain why they do what they do and get more buy in. Have several partnerships with volunteers that also contribute resources to leverage costs. Roach explained the grounds and conservation funding revenue and explained it can only spend 30% of funding and the remaining 70% must be rolled back into funding.

Roach manages the budget in a way that all facility, grounds, conservation, and cemetery can support each other and makes the budget support where the needs are. Some of the new things coming up are the care for plants and trees on St. Paul Street, trees and any other new acquisitions or new management of rain gardens and determining cost and labor, adaptation of management of mowing frequency and landscaped areas, get comparable data from other cities regarding amount of land acquisition, seeking additional revenue sources, understanding what deferred maintenance has been caused by understaffing, opportunities for improved volunteer use throughout parks system and shifts in revenue/expense and budget are reflective of changes in staffing needs and management practices.

Traverse was happy with planting's on St. Paul Street, said looking at the plans of the Champlain Parkway and breaking ground and asked if involved with that at all, Roach said the design was done in the 80's and the funding is as such, can do more perennials but a real sensitivity to changing the plan from the government and the federal funding is sitting waiting for department to spend and based on the plan and scheduled to go away if not used by a certain date. Wight suggested asking DPW what the plans are with Champlain parkway. BPRW suggestion is to not do what was rendered back in the 80's. Todd asked if department looks at other cities and what they do with planter spaces and explained that in other places they are done in partnership with businesses and if there was a way to share the cost and maintenance. Roach said planters are funded through traffic, and parking and traffic are together



and communicate with them, BPRW knows that all planting programs bottleneck in the spring, are not available in Burlington and if available could figure out how to do an outlay, still need to manage whatever program you decide to have, which is one point of contact. Need to be staffed appropriately.

Wight stated that Cate manages the recreation facilities, second go around for facilities at BTV Stat, have a comparison from 2018 to 2019, slight change in gym time in the summer because Sarah Holbrook teen center did not use the gym. Changed staffing around and can have some cleaning time earlier which helped. \$10,000 up in revenue, more due to programs rather than rental revenues. Working on cost recovery 63% in 2018 and 65% in 2019, bringing in this percentage of the income, showed a model of a cost recovery, with different target areas, ie recreation centers, programs, individual benefits, specialized programs with minimal participants. Will begin to look at this type of model to determine cost recovery. Leddy had a higher level of cost recovery, the CORE center did not have very good data, not tracking really well, need to work on, not reserving own spaces, set up for better recording of data moving forward for usage and programming. Looked at shelters and have high level of usage, very popular, need to look at something at Leddy, high demand for something to be added. Explained unique users, such as BAHA and other specialties, but may be low numbers but specialty type programs. Will be looking into tracking methods moving forward. Civic Rec switch was mainly a software change but did see a large change in on-line use and did make a big impact staff wise, also added a question to ask for donations. Cate stated working on collecting demographic information on surveys and language challenges, working on cost recovery matrix, reduced staffing, increased outreach for scholarship outreach.

Wight said a lot of staff time but seeing a lot of results and different stats that were needed to make decisions and see the different benefits.

Todd felt a lot of overlap with projects and asked if it was seen in some way, was there a list or report with shared projects and costs, Roach said is more and more, all go to meetings when a sidewalk or project is happening, they go to all meetings and are a participant and involved in the entire project. Very strong connection with the divisions and the work that is involved. Streets are doing less and relying on BPRW more for expertise on the vegetation and storm water. Todd felt more of a need for funds and not just DPW budget should be increased but BPRW should also be increased as more work is being given out.

Public Forum (Time Certain 6:00PM)

Public forum opened at 6:41 p.m. by Commission Chair Pierce.

Seeing nobody from the public the forum was closed.

Public forum closed at 6:41 p.m.

Revision and Update of the Off Leash Dog Ordinance

Wight explained that historically she is the fourth director dealing with this issue, 1988 is when the pilot went into effect, a lot of extensive work with committees had a clear report, and that is when the Master Plan was taking place, got put on hold until currently. Nothing in the books that is official and tougher to deal with no real signed legal areas and rules and regulations. Would like to be able to be more specific about what the rules and regulations are. Breaking into two areas, the ordinance and the policy, the policy will be what is brought to the commission for approval, the ordinance is appendix D



and shows the differences, the off leash opportunities, that is all the ordinance says, each will have an off leash area and times. Will have two off leash parks. Gets to the point of in additions of penalties you can be ejected, talks about the rules, how many in the park and establishes and maintains a policy.

The policy that got separated out states times, signage, how to collect money, any outreach.

Ordinance will stay more basic, is good and the policy is where will decide out more of the details piece. 2011-2013, want one in each area of the city and would like to say that in the ordinance.

Working on bringing to the commission, got approval from administration to move forward, PAAC will meet tomorrow night and will review the same, PAAC will bring to council or send to the ordinance committee. Once gone to PAAC it will just look to see that BPRW will create a policy.

Wight looking for approval to move forward with putting before the next level asked what desire was for ordinance versus policy and how to put forward.

Motion was made to separate the policy from the ordinance and send the ordinance to the City Council by Todd, second by Healy, motion carried.

Traverse asked if the appendix D would be the rules and regulations of the department and Roach said have section 21 but also the appendix is the rule. Good question to ask the City Council as to how the appendix relates to the chapters. Traverse prefers to keep more in the policy where it is more flexible, likes to keep more open and not necessary to even separate out specific areas and just say the BPRW has authority to maintain parks more openly.

Update on Parks Foundation (Standing Item)

Wight said working on "plan giving", managed through Vermont Community Foundation and it is a \$25,000 minimum. Would not be project focused but more general for anyone that would like to donate to the Foundation through a will or something of the like.

Report from Commission on Volunteer Hours (Standing Item)

Putzier asked the Commission for their hours, Todd spent another hour at the Wildways meeting and Pierce stated that he had an additional hour of time.

Director's Items

Wight explained renovating 645 Pine, Planning division is currently renting space above Maglianaro, Emma Allen, Event Coordinator is also there, construction should be done mid-December, on schedule, Leddy renovating maintenance shop will start October 1st and done at the end of December, grounds and Tree divisions will be located in the new building, will be a potent soil pile covered during this project. Will be from site and going back into the ground after construction. New planner hired, Sophie Sauve, currently working for Dubois and King, will be meeting on site again at Starr Farm for more input and to discuss the site of dog park, approval from Army Corp of Engineers to make bike path wider and start construction this fall and coming back in the spring to finish paving, may be closed all winter, City Hall Park is on schedule, Heineburg Sr. Center will be meeting to find resolution on the City taking over the center.

Commissioner's Items



Traverse stated he had someone reach out about more shelters in Burlington for events and thought it would be a great idea, loves segment zero of the bike path and excited for the remainder of the path to be being finished.

Healy said the Tower Keepers are having a pot luck at 6 p.m. on Thursday, particularly to learn more about volunteering, and she will not be at the October and November Commission meetings.

Todd asked about permits being reviewed and was interested in keeping the bike path open during events and was invited to go to the Events Advisory Committee meeting, Putzier will make sure the commission is invited.

Farrell thanked for the BTV Stat presentation.

Pierce thanked Bossange for his time on the commission and thanked him for all of his service and experience, sorry to see him go.

Wight encouraged the commission to think about what they would like the commission to look like moving forward and what things they would like to discuss.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:15 p.m. by Todd, second by Farrell, motion carried.

